

Supportive Housing for Families

Good evening. My name is Yesy Rivera and for the past ten years I have worked as a Housing Specialist for The Connection Inc. Supportive Housing for Families. I would like to thank you for giving me the opportunity to speak about my position with The Connection and the importance of helping our clients as they seek safe, affordable, permanent housing.

My real work as a Housing Specialist begins once a client passes the assessment phase with his/her case manager and I receive notification that a unit inspection would be needed, once an apartment is located. It is then that we begin the process of the getting the client ready for a Section 8 voucher or RAP certificate.

Section 8 Vouchers and RAP Certificates are administered by the Department of Social Services and distributed to our clients by J. D'Amelia Associates after the clients attend an orientation.

Housing vouchers provide permanent, stable, housing that they otherwise would be waiting years to receive. They help our client's lead more productive lives and have helped the children in the family to feel safer and more secure thereby increasing the child's level of success in school and in the community.

Housing vouchers allow the head of the household to focus on employment because housing is no longer an issue. They help by freeing up the client's money to go toward food and medical expenses for families.

Housing vouchers help to preserve families and are cost effective to the State of Connecticut, as foster homes prove to be far more expensive to the state and much more emotionally destructive to the families.

Housing vouchers assist us at Supportive Housing for Families to help more families within our State receive the help they so desperately need. They assist us as we work toward accomplishing our mission by teaming up with professionals dedicated to accessing safe, affordable, and permanent housing.

And so, even though government resources are tight, it is important for lawmakers to keep in mind the important potential benefits of housing vouchers. Large reductions in the number of vouchers available to low-income families may create substantial increases in housing instability, overcrowding, and other undesirable outcomes for this population and the community they live in. (<http://www.mathematica-mpr.com/publications/PDFs/wfnjhousing.pdf>)

Thank you.